

SINCLAIR  
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Sinclair

John

2 of W. O. B 1797-1801

201. John Edmundson = Lucy to  
John Sinclair & w. Mary adm of Th J. ames &  
Martha Mackie ex L of Andrew Mackie

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES  
OF  
CAPTAIN JOHN SINCLAIR  
PRIVATEERMAN, SHIP OWNER AND  
CAPTAIN IN THE VIRGINIA NAVY OF THE REVOLUTION

BY  
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ASSISTED BY  
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ON THE OCCASION OF THE GATHERING OF CAPTAIN SINCLAIR'S  
DESCENDENTS, AUGUST 21, 1955 AT BAY COTTAGE IN  
GLOUCESTER COUNTY, VIRGINIA

Captain John Sinclair was born March 14, 1755, (ref. 1) His will was written August 18, 1815 with codicils added in 1817 and 1818. He died at Lands End in Gloucester County in 1820 (2). He was the son of Henry Sinclair of Aberdeen, Scotland and Hampton, Virginia (3).

Almost nothing is known of John's early life and no records are known to exist (2). His mother was Martha Brock, probably of Isle of Wight County. John probably lived in Hampton as a child and perhaps also in Isle of Wight. He is known to have had a sister, Margaret, who married Edward Lattimer of Hampton; of this marriage there were at least two daughters, Ann Lattimer and Mrs. Jett who lived in Hampton in the late 1800's. The sons, John and James were raised by Captain John, following their father's death and mother's second marriage. Margaret and John had a brother Tom, probably younger, who was a sailor in the Revolution. He married \_\_\_\_\_ (probably a sister of John's second wife) and died without issue; he is believed to be buried at Fatsworth in Gloucester. In 195- Earl Taliaferro found at his home, Hackley, an old telescope inscribed with the name G. T. Sinclair. This is believed to have belonged to Tom Sinclair and was given to Jefferson Keith Sinclair by Mr. Taliaferro; it is now in the Symms-Eaton Museum.

Although Captain John was only twenty at the beginning of the Revolution he was undoubtedly captaining his own vessels prior to the outbreak of hostilities. Listings in the Virginia Gazette in 1768 (4) and 1769 (5) of ships captained by Sinclair were almost certainly those of Captain John. One of these was the Anne (5) probably named for Anne Elizabeth Wilson whom he married (3) in (date unknown, erroneously given by Chapman as 1792, probably about 1774) A quotation from the Virginia Gazette under date of May 2, 1768 reads as follows: (4)

"Captain Sinclair sailed from the Downs the 4th of March and on the 7th ult., in lat. 37, long 62 he fell in with the brig Nancy, Captain Service from Glasgow, for Virginia in great distress, out 7 weeks, 3 feet water in her hold, and in company with the ship Prospect from Cape Fear bound for Bristol. The Captain and crew of the Nancy being determined to abandon the brig, part of the cargo with the mate and one of the seamen Captain Sinclair has brought in here, and the remainder of the crew with as much of the cargo as could be got was put on board the Prospect and carried to Bristol."

(About the same time Arthur Sinclair of Surry was Captain of the Industry and Alicia and perhaps of other ships but in spite of their proximity and similar interests John and Arthur were probably not relatives. According to Media Research Bureau Arthur was the son of Susanne Phillips and Arthur Sinclair, a native of Scotland (6).)

John probably inherited his taste for the sea and perhaps his ship also from his father. A descendent contributing a silver tea bell said to have been used by the Sinclairs in Scotland and America to the Pocahontas Bell in 1907 recorded her forefather as Captain Henry Sinclair, second son of the Earl of Caithness (7). As early as 1751 (8) and perhaps earlier Captain Sinclair of the "Betsy" and the "Virginian" was coming into the James River from Bristol with some regularity; in the fall of 1752 he made the trip on the "Betsy" in five weeks (9).



The master of these vessels was probably John's father Henry, known to have resided in Hampton and probably Smithfield. According to family tradition he was the son of the Earl of Caithness and was kidnapped as an infant and brought to this country.

Our records of Captain John begin with his early manhood in Isle of Wight County where he lived with his wife Anne Elizabeth Wilson during the later years of the war and until her death which probably occurred about 1783. Anne (often referred to as Elizabeth) was the sister of Solomon Wilson and Honour Wilson Pasteur and the daughter of George and Judith Wilson<sup>(10)</sup>. The date of her birth is unknown; her father died early and her mother was married a second time in 1760, this time to Josiah Cutchin<sup>(11)</sup>. Judith's children by this marriage, Mary and Mathew Cutchin, left legacies to their nieces Margaret Mary and Nancy (Ann) Sinclair daughters of their sister, Ann Sinclair<sup>(11-12)</sup>. A note in the will of Mary attested to the death of Margaret who must have died at an early age<sup>(12)</sup>. Both John Sinclair and John Pasteur (husband of Honour Wilson) are listed as securities and executors.

John Sinclair and John Pasteur, brothers-in-law and sea captains, must have worked closely together. Both sailed regularly between the West Indies and the Virginia Coast during the war and both carried cargo for Van Bishner and Harrison in the early years. The "Mollie" identified by members of the family as the ship on which Captain John ran the British blockade to communicate with the French was captained by John Pasteur during the greater portion of the war<sup>(13)</sup>. Captain Pasteur was part owner of the "Mollie" in 1777 when she was sold (presumably to Captain Sinclair) but Captain Pasteur continued to command her and Edward Lattimore (husband of John Sinclair's sister Margaret) was appointed First Lieutenant<sup>(14)</sup>.

Records of Captain Sinclair's activities during the Revolution are extremely meager and scattered. In order to bring supplies to the American troops and give some protection to the sea coast it was necessary to depend upon private ship owners to a great degree. Each State contributed as many privately owned vessels as she could muster and supplemented these with government owned ships. Virginia with her excellent harbors and well developed shipping interests contributed a naval force known as the Virginia State Boats (later the Virginia Navy of the Revolution)<sup>(15)</sup>. Captain John contributed his services and those of his ships throughout the war. He sailed from European ports but more often between the West Indies (St Eustatius) and Virginia carrying cargo for trade and ammunition for the troops, and preying upon the English shipping. The service of the privateers was extremely hazardous; the ships were dependent upon speed and skill in order to out manouver the more heavily armed British vessels. Officers were given appropriate rank in the American forces and officers and men were entitled to pay. Captain Sinclair "neither requested nor received remuneration for his services". For this reason he was never listed on the pay rolls and since none of his heirs applied for pension claims in 1830-36 his name is missing from a number of the official listings of officers of the Revolution.

Records of his activities in the War include:

1. Williamsburg, May 14, 1776  
"To Captain James Barron  
"Same (payment) to same (for suppt of his Co., arms, supplies etc.) for use John Sinclair for 3 (pounds) for a musquet to Captain Arthur Smith's Comp'y". (17). This was doubtless in connection with the actions of the Committee of Safety of Isle of Wight and perhaps connected with the capture of the notorious Goodriches (18).
2. Sept. 1 entered Lower district of James River "Schooner St. Andrew, John Sinclair from New York with 13 tierces of loaf sugar, 2 hogsheads of molasses, 3 barrels of vinegar, 1 barrel of flour, and 8 hogsheads of rum" (19).

Stewart in his Roster of the Virginia Navy of the Revolution lists Captain John Sinclair as in command of the Nicholson in 1777.

3. On April 10, 1777 Van Bibber of the firm of Van Bibber and Harrison wrote from the Island of St. Eustatia, "The Little Boat Nicholson, Captain John Saintclare arrived yesterday with 13 casks Idigo".
4. On April 21st of the same year Van Bibber wrote to Aylett:  
"There is just arrived here the Captain and crew of a very fine schooner that sailed from here about Two Hours before Captain Saintclare (Sinclair) and was bound for Newfoundland But Captain Saintclare over Hauled him that night and altered the Schooners voyage to Virginia and landed such of his crew (as did not chuse to go to Virginia) on the Island of Saba. I am told Captain Sinclares Prize had on board 800 Joes in Specie 100 hhds of Rum & 24 of Sugar - I do sincerely wish Saintclare and his Prize may arrive safe. He appears to me to be the most deserving Cleaver young fellow that I have seen and a very striking Contrast between him and Ralls.\* Saintclare on his arrival here proposed to me to take his Cargoe & give him his return in goods intended for homewards Cargoe & that he & his Vessel & Crew should be ready to Sail that same day & he did Sail within 30 hours after his Arrival here, & with the least trouble & noise I ever noticed & had his Prize in Possession in four hours afterwards."

"Pardon me for Entertaining you with my Remarks and oppinions of your Officers."

\* Ralls in an unsuccessful attempt to take prizes at sea after sailing from St. Eustatius gave testimony most embarrassing to Van Bibber. See Stewart's History of Virginia's Navy of the Revolution, p 27 et seq.

I speak Impartially and only wish you to know those that are worthy of your Esteem"

5. The Virginia Gazette, May 9, 1777 relates:  
"Captain John Sinclair on his passage from St. Eustatia took a schooner with 123 hogshead of rum, 2 ditto of sugar, and a ditto of coffee sent her into North Carolina<sup>(22)</sup>."
6. Also from the Virginia Gazette May 19, 1777 <sup>(23)</sup>  
"Capt. Sinclair with now just arrived with small arms, dry goods, etc. from France with a gentlemen come and <sup>(23)</sup> passenger with him, some years in London but lately thought it prudent to come with dispatches from our ambassador and the Court of France to the Hon. of the Congress of the United States. Captain Sinclair on his passage took a schooner from the Grenades with 123 hhd of rum. 2 do. of molasses, and 30 barrels of coffee which he parted with off the Coast of North Carolina and makes no doubt she is arrived by this time in a safe port in that state as they had fair wind."<sup>(23)</sup>
7. A notice in the Virginia Gazette of the same date reads: "After her cargo consisting of 121 hhd of Grenada Rum, one hhd and 14 barrels of good coffee and two barrels of excellent musco and sugar. An inventory of the sails, rigging, etc may be seen by applying to Captain Kenon - - - - - to Capt Sinclair at Hampton by whom she was taken in the Nicholas (son?) Armed vessel belonging to this state or to the subscriber in the city.-  
(Signed) Ben Powell, Marshall"

During this period the former colonies were no longer able to continue their trade with the British West Indies but must depend upon the Dutch and French islands. Van Bibber and Harrison, originally from Maryland, established in Martinique and St. Eustatia. By June, 1779 when Jefferson succeeded Patrick Henry as Governor the Virginia boats had been so harassed that he wrote to John Jay, "Our trade has a never been so distressed since the time of Lord Dunmore as it is at present by a parcel of trifling privateers under the countenance of two or three larger vessels who keep our little naval force from doing anything." <sup>(24)</sup> Perhaps Captain John's ships were kept more closely at home, perhaps his activities were less publicized. His earlier successes in capturing prizes from the enemy may have continued for he never placed himself on the officer's payroll. Captain Sinclair evidently preferred to work as independently as possible. So successful was he that Capt. Ralls<sup>(25)</sup> tried most disastrously to follow his example and although Virginia's own State vessels sent to France for supplies in 1777 were not dispatched for their return trip until October 17th<sup>(25)</sup> Captain Sinclair brought in supplies from France in May of that year<sup>(23)</sup>.



Further evidence of Captain Sinclair's contributions to the cause of the Revolution is in the statement by Commodore James Barron that only the Liberty and the Nicholson of all of Virginia's ships were not taken by the enemy before the siege of Yorktown.<sup>(27)</sup> Just prior to the Battle of Yorktown when the British Fleet was in the Bay these two vessels were sunk "in a deep hole in the Nansemond River" to conceal them from the enemy.<sup>(27)</sup> When the French Fleet arrived the two ships were floated and used to transport provisions; on this occasion the Nicholson was under the command of Lieutenant William Ham who "was a favorite of Commodore Barron".<sup>(28)</sup> The several references to the Nicholson (a schooner) list no other captain but, according to Stewart's Roster she was also commanded at various times in the later years of the War by Lieutenants Speake, Mercer, Jennings, and Steele and by Sailing Master Dawsey.<sup>(29)</sup>

In September, 1780 it became necessary for Jefferson to provide a transport or convoy for Chevalier D'Anmours, the French consul; since the State vessels were at sea the Nicholson was commissioned for this service; under command of Lt. William Steele she sailed to meet the French dignitary at Cape Henry Sept. 15th.<sup>(30)</sup> After the siege at Yorktown the Nicholson, commanded by Lt. Jennings, was captured by a British frigate "with woodwork cunningly painted French style and masthead flying French colors."<sup>(31)</sup>

Just prior to the Battle of Yorktown, when the plight of the Americans seemed desperate indeed, Captain Sinclair was commissioned by La Fayette to carry dispatches to the French Fleet then lying off of Rhode Island.<sup>(32)</sup> These he delivered safely after eluding the enemy vessels; one report of this incident states that he also delivered ammunition loaded at Havana to Count de Grasse "to enable him to cooperate with the Americans". This account given by his grand daughter, Elizabeth Sinclair Parker Jones, also says, "He was hailed on his return trip by a British cruiser, and his quick and cool reply that his was 'a supply ship' disarmed suspicion and he was allowed to proceed."<sup>(16)</sup> She adds that he made this voyage in his own vessel the Little Mollie. Frances Sinclair Curtis, great grand daughter of Captain Sinclair, gives a slightly different version: "On Captain Sinclair's return his cargo was unloaded into small boats; his men rowed in the darkness of the night with muffled oars through British lines and finally the powder was delivered to the American Forces."<sup>(33)</sup> According to Frances Curtis it was on the Little Mollie that Captain Sinclair piloted the French Fleet into the York River.

The French Fleet under Count de Grasse arrived off the Capes August 31st, 1781.<sup>(34)</sup> According to family tradition it was Captain Sinclair in the Little Mollie who brought the French Fleet into the York and a sword presented to him by Count de Grasse was given in appreciation of this service yet Stewart says:

"On September 2 came the long wished for and expected tidings that the Count de Grasse with a powerful armament of 28 ships of the line, six frigates, and 3000 land forces, after pushing aside an attempt to engage him at sea, had cast anchor close to Cape Henry. And this time pilots launched out with out fear of deception. William Jennings, under instructions from Capt. Richard Barron, took charge of the Northumberland, which along with the other French vessels numbering thirty sail (according to Capt. Pasteur), all capably piloted, was conducted in safety from the Cape to York Spit about twenty miles below York Town."<sup>(35)</sup>

In Stewart's Roster information re Francis Hobday of Gloucester, Co., Pilot, is given: "Piloted the French Fleet into York River - - -" (36). Indeed Captain Sinclair may have been one of these pilots but it is more likely that, bearing dispatches from La Fayette who was stationed near Richmond and not in close communication with the besieged patriots at Yorktown (37) he slipped through the British vessels in the Little Mollie, rendezvoused with the French Fleet off Rhode Island, delivered his dispatches, and piloted the flagship of the Fleet down the coast, into the Chesapeake, and thence to the York. The sword given to Captain Sinclair by Count de Grasse has descended through five generations to James Clay Sinclair and was placed by him in the Symes-Eaton Museum in Hampton.

General William Taliaferro of Gloucester always referred to John Sinclair as "Commodore Sinclair" saying that he was in command of a fleet of his own vessels which he used in the service of his country. (2) The names of some of the ships are unknown but there were the Nicholson, the Molly, the St. Andrew and no doubt others. John's brothers-in-law, Capt. John Pasteur and Lt. Edward Lattimore (Lattimer) worked with him as did no doubt his younger brother Tom. The Barrons, Cunninghams, Herediths, Parkers and other noted seamen of Smithfield and Hampton appear to have been his close associates. In 1787 following the death of James Barron, Commander of the State Boats, Col. Josiah Parker (older brother of Copeland Parker) recommended Captain Sinclair for the post and described him as "Formerly a Capt. in the State Navy, and among the first who took prizes from our adversaries, who was also successful by his Privateers, and received the particular confidence of the Marquis de la Fayette, and was charged with dispatches with him to the French Fleet at Rhode Island on a particular occasion, well known to all those deeply interested in the late war" (38). If Captain Sinclair was considered favorably by the Naval Board he refused the appointment. Perhaps he refused the command of the United States Navy also; Frances Sinclair Curtis wrote: "After the war General Washington at the recommendation of John Marshall offered Captain Sinclair the command of the Navy but he refused, preferring to live the life of a country gentleman." (33)

At the close of the War Captain Sinclair was living on his farm, Berry Hill, in Isle of Wight County. Some of the original buildings are still standing on the large acreage now owned by the DeShield family. The State census of 1782 lists him as head of a family with "White 9, Black 32." (39) His family included his wife, Anne Elizabeth, who died about 1787; his daughters Margaret (deceased in infancy or early childhood), Mary (Polly), and Elizabeth (Anne Elizabeth and sometimes called Anne or Nancy); his sons Tom and William (who was drowned when a child) (2); and his nephews James and John Lattimer. Of the latter Stewart (40) recounts that upon the death of Edward Lattimer whose wife was Margaret Sinclair these two sons were brought up by their uncle, her brother. (James died at sea near St. Eustatius unmarried, and John was living in Smithfield in 1830. Margaret Sinclair Lattimer married Col. James Bridger of Isle of Wight who died August 13, 1782 leaving a bequest to his son Thomas Sinclair Bridger. (41))

Between the close of the War and 1796 Captain Sinclair, though continuing his shipping interests, busied himself with development of his property and the interests of his family and neighbors. In 1792 he was authorized to build a toll-bridge over Pagan Creek at Smithfield: "It shall be lawful for the said John Sinclair, his heirs and assigns, to demand and receive the following tolls or rates for the passage of any person or thing over the said bridge, that is to say: The price for a man five cents, and for a horse the same; for every coach, chariot, or waggon and the driver thereof, the same as for six horses;"<sup>(42)</sup> etc. During this period he received a legacy from a friend John Barlowe<sup>(43)</sup> (nature unknown) and served as security, executor, or appraiser for the wills or estates of James Bridger<sup>(44)</sup>, John Taylor<sup>(45)</sup>, Lewis Mansford<sup>(46)</sup>, Anthony Dogge<sup>(47)</sup> and Mathew Cutchin<sup>(48)</sup>, all of Isle of Wight County.

July 23, 1791 Captain Sinclair was married for the second time to Mary Mackie Ianson (J<sup>r</sup> Anson) of Gloucester County;<sup>(49)</sup> she was the widow of Thomas Ianson<sup>(50)</sup> and the daughter of Andrew Mackie of "Sherwood in Gloucester."<sup>(3)</sup> Mary and Thomas Ianson had three children, Archibald, Richard, and Elizabeth, the youngest a posthumous child just six weeks old at the time of her mother's marriage to Captain Sinclair.<sup>(2)</sup> Mary is said to have protested at such haste but to have been told by her housekeeper that Captain Sinclair had made up his mind and she might as well give up and marry him! Mary later related that on the night of her marriage her first husband came to her room and held his hands over the baby's cradle. The Iansons were closely associated with the Sinclair family; Archibald died when living at Greenway (a part of the Mackie estate bought by Captain Sinclair and the place was bought by Richard Page, to be returned to the Sinclairs later by purchase of Jefferson Sinclair, II. In Four Point Marsh (now a part of Bay Cottage and the only portion of Captain John's estate continuously in possession of his descendents) is a small inlet known to all local watermen as Iansons Bay.

In 1794 there occurred the "Unicorn Incident" of which a lengthy account is given in the letters and reports of G. H. Taylor, Alexander Campbell, Copeland Parker, D. M. Randolph, John Marshall, James Wills, and George Benn printed in the Calendar of Virginia Papers, Volume 7 (available in the State Library, Library of the Virginia Historical Society, and the Alderman Library of the University of Virginia, also in typed and photostatic copy with the author). This incident in which Capt. John was accused by the British Consul of outfitting the ship Unicorn as a privateer to prey upon British trade at sea resulted in the elopement and consequent estrangement of Capt. John's daughter Elizabeth. Copeland Parker, then Surveyor in Smithfield, wrote to William Lindsay, Collector at Norfolk, concerning the Unicorn as follows: "She now appears to be fitting for an armed vessel, having a slight waist run up, with eleven port holes of a side. She is under the direction of Mr. John Sinclair, a native of this country who has expatriated himself by law and calls himself a citizen of France.\* - - What may be Mr. Sinclair's intentions I do not know, but it is generally said she is to go to sea well armed and well manned with citizens of the United States. It is thought by some, that she has been commissioned by

\*I have found no evidence that Captain Sinclair ever gave up his American Citizenship - The Author

Admiral Vanstable, by others that she is to go to a French port, and there obtain a commission to act against the enemies of the French Republic." (51) Copeland Parker, when consulted by Major Taylor who was sent to Smithfield to investigate, "alleged that the ship was equipping for the purpose of privateering, and informed me from the bold and enterprising disposition of Sinclair as well as from the expense he had incurred, a passive relinquishment of the object was scarcely to be expected." (52) It appears that Mr. Parker, at that time a suitor for the hand of Elizabeth Sinclair was somewhat overzealous and singularly unwise in furthering his own interests. Samuel Butler, investigating for the Governor consulted the Colo. Commandant James Wells (Wills) of Smithfield on July 15th. He wrote the Governor relative to the matter:

"Col. Wells told me there had been such a report, and in consequence thereof he had endeavored to obtain every possible information concerning it but that he had not been able to establish the fact, nor did he believe it was the intention of Mr. Sinclair or any one concerned in the ship, to fit her out for the above purpose."

"After making the fullest inquiry of every disinterested person from whom I could expect to receive the smallest information, and having strictly examined the ship -----, I waited on Mr. Sinclair, and interrogated him respecting the matter. He solemnly declared to me that the ship was not intended for a privateer." (53)

Notwithstanding the dubious evidence Major Taylor in company with the United States Marshal, D. D. Randolph, repaired to Smithfield on July 19th to take possession of the ship which was duly done; however so reluctant were the local militia under Col. Wills and Major George Benn to assist in the matter and so great was the consternation of Mr. Randolph and Major Taylor that they dispatched letters in great haste to the Governor, fearing that they would be unable to withstand any attack which Capt. Sinclair might make and believing him prepared to do so. Captain Sinclair later averred that it was never his intention to resist seizure of the ship but only to protect his home from unwarranted search and seizure. In fact Mr. Randolph wrote in his letter to the Governor, "I have received a formal warning from Sinclair, to wit, that if 500 men attempt to search his house & his life shall be the forfeit, he will put the first man to death." (54) Similarly Major Taylor wrote, "I have further to add, that we are informed from sources too respectable to afford room for doubt, that in a house contiguous, a number of cannon, muskets, and balls, and a considerable quantity of powder are deposited. The house, Captain Sinclair has informed us, he will lose his life defending." (55) Major Taylor and Marshall Randolph had not been instructed to search the house but requested further direction in the matter and also armed reinforcements. A revenue cutter was dispatched from Norfolk and Norfolk militia were sent on her to Smithfield. Later General John Marshall at the head of a troop of Richmond cavalry arrived under orders from the Governor. Of the matter he wrote to the Chief Executive:

"Immediately on my arrival, the Marshal made a peaceable request on Captain Sinclair to allow his house to be searched for arms supposed to be contained in it, which he did not hesitate to permit." (56)



The search disclosed cannon, ball, and powder and these with the Unicorn were conveyed by the revenue cutter to Bermuda Hundred. John Marshall added: "Captain Sinclair declares that he never designed to violate the laws; that the arms found in the house were not intended for the Unicorn but were purchased for a gentleman to the Southward; that the ball will not fit the cannon, and that though she was originally designed for a privateer, the intention was changed as soon as the Act of Congress prohibiting vessels to be armed in our ports was known; in proof of which he says that a cargo is now engaged for her. These, however are subjects proper to be discussed in court"(57).

The case came to court in Williamsburg and the charges were dismissed, but the injury which Captain Sinclair felt had been done by Copeland Parker was never forgiven. Relative to Mr. Parker John Marshall wrote:

"I am sorry to say that the Surveyor of the Post, who is considered here as the informer, seems to entertain great apprehension from some of those who considered themselves as interested in this business"(58)

Copeland Parker, to become in 1796 the son-in-law of Captain Sinclair, was already, though s he was but fourteen, paying Elizabeth Sinclair his addresses having been attracted to her in her eleventh year.(59) In his journal Mr. Parker wrote: "I spoke to her father on the subject who readily gave his approbation, but before the time had been fixed for the ceremony I caused his ship to be seized for a breach of the revenue laws, for which he never after forgave me."(60) Although he was forbidden the house Elizabeth was not to be gainsaid and "after numerous entreaties to her father for his consent, which was as often refused" Elizabeth left her father's house and in a building on the North Caroline-Virginia line they were married at midnight January 25, 1796.(61) At the time of the elopement Captain Sinclair was enroute to the West Indies but as he went out the Capes he had a premonition that something was wrong at home, so he brought his ship about and set sail for Smithfield. Elizabeth, meanwhile, had the assistance and sympathy of a kinswoman at whose home the two young people continued to meet after her father's prohibition.(62) and also of her step-mother whose "silk pelisse" she wore for her elopement and marriage.(2) Captain Sinclair never forgave his daughter or her husband nor did he recognize their children in his will except with the traditional "one dollar to be divided among them, as a full share of what I ever intended to give their Mother."(63) Oddly enough Mr. Parker though fully cognizant of the determined nature of Captain Sinclair held his wife (Mary Sinclair) entirely responsible for Captain Sinclair's relentlessness.(64) Since Elizabeth had received no dowry as was then customary Copeland Parker was alarmed at his need for means "to provide for a woman who had always lived gently in her father's house, who had never known the fatigue of labor, or the want of delicacies."(65) Elizabeth and Copeland Parker lived in affection and happiness for eleven years when she died in childbirth leaving three daughters and one son. That Elizabeth cherished her Sinclair heritage is evident from the way in which her descendents have commemorated their maternal lineage. Her oldest daughter Elizabeth Sinclair Parker Jones was a charter member of the Daughters of the Revolution and her children have cherished the Sinclair name and have established a memorial to it in the Pocahontas Bell and to Elizabeth Sinclair and Copeland Parker in the alter of St. Luke's Church in Smithfield.

Shortly after Elizabeth's marriage Captain John Sinclair built Lands End on the Severn River in Gloucester and moved his family to the new home. Andrew Mackie, father of Mary Mackie Ianson Sinclair owned a large estate in Robin's Neck and resided at Sherwood. After his death the estate of 2000 acres was divided (1792) and his daughter Mary received 160 acres.<sup>(3)</sup> By 1795 Captain Sinclair had increased this to 1280 and by 1798 to 1440 all presumably in Robin's Neck. Lands End was built on the lower portion of the property and it was not until some years later that John Sinclair acquired Sherwood, the original Mackie home. A sketched plot and brief description of Lands End is included in the insurance records photostated in the book Records of Colonial Gloucester County Virginia by Polly Cary Iason.<sup>(66)</sup> The plat erroneously labeled "Clover Fields" and dated 1815 describes a dwelling house, kitchen, laundry and barn. The house is still standing and is in fair condition though not in use; the kitchen was razed in the 1930's.

When Captain John moved to Gloucester he was about 41 years of age; he brought with him the Ianson children, his daughter Mary Jones and his son Tom, also a small daughter Caroline and an infant son John born in 1796. The two younger children were of the second marriage and there were to be two more - Jefferson Bonaparte (born 1800) and Martha Mary John. This large household was supplemented by numerous dependents and employers black and white. Captain Sinclair continued his shipping interests but also developed his farm land. He was an Episcopalian and attended Abingdon Church. His association with Isle of Wight County and Smithfield became less close, although he continued to own property in Isle of Wight which he willed to his daughter Mary Jones. His daughter, known in the family as "Aunt Polly" went with her brother Tom to Mississippi<sup>(2)</sup>. For many years she corresponded with family but after the war between the States no news was received from her. Tom's daughter Margaret was mentioned in Captain John's will but her father was said to be deceased in 1815.<sup>(63)</sup>

The four younger children and Captain John's second wife were all living at the time of his death and his estate was divided among them with bequests also to Miss Polly Baker, and employee and valued member of the household, who was in charge of the weaving rooms, and to Polly Fones, his housekeeper (revoked by codicil added in 1817).

Caroline the eldest of the second set of children, was married to Cary Jones; they lived first at Bay Cottage built on the eastern tip of Lands End; after Captain John's death they moved to Lands End. (The ball room was added in the interests of their seven beautiful daughters) and later still to Hampton. Caroline was first engaged to a Captain Elliot<sup>(2)</sup>. He sailed from Old Point by naval vessel to meet his bride intending to return with her by the same ship. When he was anchored off Lands End a servant in a small boat brought him a letter from Caroline saying that she would not marry him. He was very angry and greatly humiliated, when on his return to Old Point, his ship was greeted with a volley of guns in the traditional salute to the bride. Later when Caroline wished to marry Cary Jones her father refused to give her away saying "I have given her to one man, Sir I shall never give her to another". From Caroline are descended the Colliers, the Mapps, the Floyds, the Englishes and (Mrs) Margaret Jones Hooper.

The younger daughter, Mary, married Alexander Jones, a brother of Cary; their daughter Elva married Dr. Cooper, who was a surgeon of the U. S. Army in the war between the States. Their daughter Georgia died without issue.

The son John Sinclair married first Margaret Munford and second Lucy Baytop.

Jefferson married Georgianna Uray. The descendents of these two sons are numerous both in Gloucester and in Hampton, Virginia and also in Arkansas and other states.

Captain John Sinclair was a man of determination, integrity, and enterprise. He was successful in his ventures both on land and sea; he was undoubtedly a man of charm and distinction. It is said that Ann Wilson was first attended by Capt. John's first mate (John Pasteur, perhaps, who later married her sister Honour Wilson) and that on challenge Capt. John received his permission to supplant him in her affections if he could! (2) Daring in love and in war and successful in both Captain Sinclair amassed a fortune and a reputation which he hoped to bequeath to his children. The Fifteenth Psalm was a favorite of his and it was his expressed wish that all of his descendents might employ it as their guide and abide by it in all their dealings. (2)

PSALM 15

- Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle? Who shall dwell in thy holy hill?
- 2 He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.
  - 3 He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour.
  - 4 In whose eyes a vile person is condemned; but he honoureth them that fear the Lord. He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.
  - 5 He that putteth not out his money to usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never be moved.

## REFERENCES

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